

A

FUNERAL SERMON,

PREACHED AT PITTSFIELD,

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1831,

— — — — —
AND

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH

OF THE

HON. JOHN CHANDLER WILLIAMS,

WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE, JANUARY 31, 1831.

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BY G. T. CHAPMAN, D. D.
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BOSTON,

STIMPSON AND CLAPP, 72, WASHINGTON STREET.

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George Thompson
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IN EXCHANGE.

N. E. Hist. Gent. Soc.

TO
Mrs. LUCRETIA WILLIAMS,
TO
EDWARD A. and SARAH T. NEWTON,
The greatly respected Widow, Son-in-law, and Daughter
OF THE LATE
Hon. JOHN CHANDLER WILLIAMS,
this Discourse is affectionately inscribed,
by their devoted and gratefully obliged friend,
THE AUTHOR.
PITTSFIELD, Feb. 7th, 1831.

FREEMAN AND BOLLES, PRINTERS.

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SERMON.

PSALM XXXIX. 5.

Behold thou hast made my days as a hand-breadth and mine age is as nothing before thee, verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity.

WHILE no part of the providence of God is susceptible of more complete and invincible demonstration than the brevity and uncertainty of human life, it is still melancholy to reflect, that few persons are in the habit of yielding up their minds unreservedly to this conviction. Friend after friend, relative after relative are continually hastening to the common receptacle appointed for all the living, and while the hearse is yet before our eyes ; while the mournful vacancy in our own domestick circle is yet to be made familiar to our feelings by the lenient hand of time, tears may fall and sighs be heaved ; we may think of the once smiling features that are now composed, the once active limbs that are now stiffened, by the frost of death, and the reflection may serve to remind us, that soon, far sooner than we could wish, our own pall will come sweeping by ; our own dark grave be filled with its unconscious clay. But ah ! how rapidly do these impressions wear away ! How quickly does the eye forget to weep, and the full heart to throb ! How nimbly speed the hours, in which we resume our accustomed gayety, with all the recent confidence we entertained of long days of joy and prosperity before us !

And certainly, were it possible to delay the summons of death by refusing to contemplate the proximity of his approach, I would be among the last to reveal the grisly features of this King of Terrors : I would not be the preacher to tell you, that his lance is ever couched, his pale charger ever fleet on the course to extend his triumphs, wherever there is an eye to be deprived of its lustre, or a heart to become cold and still forever. But as it is, conscious as I am, conscious as you must be, that God hath made our days, as it were a span long ; that our age

is even as nothing in respect of Him, and that every man living is altogether vanity ; — it becomes me seriously and solemnly to break the spell, in which health and vigour are too apt to involve the precious soul, and, taking advantage of the recent instance of mortality, to bid you remember that our days upon earth are as a shadow, and that there is none abiding.

For this purpose, recollect, in the first place, the immense numbers who have preceded you in the march of time, and assure yourselves of the certainty of death from the conviction, that they once lived free as the freest and gay as the gayest of mankind. Before the blood of righteous Abel cried from the ground against his murderer, there was indeed no such thing as the return of the body to the earth as it was. But, compared with all that now breathe the vital air, it is long since death, in his progress to universal empire, hath obtained the majority of our frail and perishing race. Centuries on centuries have elapsed. Multitudes on multitudes, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, which no man could number, have throughout successive ages enjoyed the same genial sun with us. They have been sustained in food and raiment from the same prolifick earth, and, to no other being than the same God, were they indebted for whatever imparted pleasure to their senses or joy to their hearts.

And yet, where are they now ? Our fathers, where are they ? Where, the almost infinite throng of mortals, who once thought, and felt, and acted their part in life, as we are accustomed to think, and feel, and act ? Gone, brethren, forever gone, precisely where we are going ; where there is no voice to disturb their slumbers ; no work to engage the labour of their hands ; no mind to inform the gross particles of matter, which in other days, beneath the effulgent splendour of the great luminary of heaven, were full of life and animation.

See you not, therefore, the inevitable destiny which awaits all the sons and daughters of men ? See you not, that if, generation after generation, the long lines of our ancestors have been compelled to submit to the last enemy, without a single survivor to connect the chain of human existence, — so, in process of time, we in our turn must become his victims, let our pleas for life be ever so strong, our reluctance to die ever so violent ?

In process of time, did I say ? Even now, the mandate of the destroyer may be issued ; even now, that fatal arrow on the

wing, which shall sever our souls from time, and transmit them with the rapidity of lightning, beyond the confines of eternity. Thither, at any rate, we are all progressing, and whether our continuance here be comparatively long or short, every year, and month, and day advance us nearer and nearer to our journey's end. Our lives indeed resemble those streams, which, having once escaped from their native hills, can never return to the fountain head, but must necessarily glide down their respective channels, until at length, in proportion to their original distance and the celerity of the current, they are destined to mingle with the waters of the great deep.

How important, then, to grow in wisdom as we grow in age. How infinitely important, to prepare with the utmost diligence to meet our God, as the eventful period steals on apace, in which all preparation will be foreclosed in the silent regions of the dead. For although many of us may be inclined to lavish away the first and fairest moments of our existence under the idea of a future and ample space for repentance, — there is still no more melancholy spectacle to be gazed at, than the unhappy being, for whom the grave is always ready, the worm reserving his voracious appetite, and who can still be enamoured with trifles, playing as it were upon the very brink of destruction : who can harden his heart against the many admonitions of the Scriptures, requiring instant and persevering efforts to enter in at the strait gate ; and scarcely think of his God and Saviour with any other emotions than those of stupid languor or criminal indifference.

Especially when we come to reflect in the second place upon the apparent pleasure with which the grim messenger delights to take the wise in their own craftiness, and thus to baffle all calculations, formed with the view of determining the number of our days. How often, for example, have you witnessed the most melancholy and loathsome objects of disease to creep on through life with the leisurely pace of a snail, while the strong and vigorous have fallen on your right hand and on your left with the ease and rapidity of grass before the mower's sithe. How often have you seen the hoar frost of years to blanch yet whiter and whiter the locks of age, when thousands and tens of thousands of the young and blooming have been destined to fill an early grave. How often have you observed parental eyes to be suffused with tears, when, contrary to all reasonable expecta-

tion, children have led the way to eternity, and imposed upon the authors of their being the mournful office of smoothing the asperities of a dying bed.

Oh yes, brethren, these are some few of the many incongruities, so frequently exhibited throughout the vast empire of death, that we might well brand him with the name of a cruel and inexorable tyrant, rejoicing in every opportunity to reveal his power where least desired, and least expected; we might well do this,—were it not that his career is controlled by infinite wisdom; and, whether he rifies the blossoms of youth, or gathers the ripened fruit of age; whether he gives timely notice of the coming storm, or flashes upon our heads like a meteor in the calm evening of a summer's day;—in either event, God himself is the benevolent Being, who directs this archer to bend his bow, and transfix his arrows in the heart of infancy or youth, of manhood or declining years.

And why? For the very substantial reason, that the acknowledged uncertainty of life might teach us, under every circumstance of time and place, to consider our latter end. It is as though HE were to declare to the young man, however ardent in expectation and confident of sailing uninjured down the stream of time,—Thy vessel is frail. The rocks are even now lurking beneath its prow; and examples are not wanting to prove that before this day's sun declines in the west, the waters may go over thy soul. It is as though HE were to arrest the attention of parents, and say unto them, however numerous their offspring and however desirable their nurture beneath a father's and a mother's care,—Think not that ye have obtained a longer lease of life, because I have blessed thee with children: Think not that my designs will be frustrated in respect of them because you may be shortly required to make your bed in death. Have I not many ages since announced myself to be the father of the fatherless? And when I am known to feed the young ravens of the valley, shall I not much more protect the orphan and supply the absence of parental love?

And then as to you, ye votaries of the world, however involved in pleasure or immersed in business; it is as though he were to remind you with an audible voice, that time and eternity wait for no man; that your joys may be withered and your fortune transferred to other hands, at the precise instant when

every thing looks most fair and tempting to the eye, most prosperous and redundant to the grasp. For whether we give heed to his summons or not, death is perpetually making his inroads upon all ranks and ages. There are none who can with impunity deride his power. But every avenue of hope is thronged with his arrows, and every period of life liable to be intercepted by his indiscriminate sithe. So teach us, therefore, O Lord, to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. Full of confidence in thee, we may well dismiss all anxiety as to the extent of our earthly pilgrimage. Inspired by thy Spirit, enlightened by thy Word, and devoted to the faith and example of thy Son, we may well rejoice in the conviction, that for us 'to live is Christ, and to die is gain.'

Which leads me, in the third place, to call up to your remembrance, the wonderful change effected by the advent and consummation of death. And here it is not my intention to ransack the pages of history for materials to evince the fading character of those hues which beam from a regal diadem. I rather feel that when eternity commences, every thing connected with a splendid court and gorgeous palace vanishes away like an agreeable dream when one awaketh. I am conscious, that at this awful moment the meanest beggar can shake hands with the mightiest monarch, can claim the same little spot of earth, and be as courteously received at the bar of judgment by the august King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

But aside from these considerations and regarding all men upon terms of strict equality, what a mournful catastrophe is that, which locks up the senses in oblivion, and robs the body of its active, intelligent, and immortal soul. The soul perhaps of those we loved : Of the friend, whose heart ever beat in unison with ours : The kind, indulgent parent, who trained us up from childhood with all the fervour and the interest of natural affection : The companion of our bosoms, endeared to our hearts by the thousand and ten thousand times ten thousand fond remembrances of domestick love : Or, those young and tender offspring, in whom we seemed to renew the days of our youth, and to be preparing our principal sources of joy and consolation against the wintry evening of our years.

But alas ! both friend and relative are no longer present to cheer and animate us in this vale of tears. They have utterly

forsaken the places, which once knew them ; and what a melancholy catastrophe, I repeat, is that, which locks up the senses in oblivion, and robs the body of its active, intelligent, and immortal soul ! Prone in the dust, and clothed in the garments of corruption is the form we were wont to embrace in the arms of fond affection. Dumb and tuneless is that voice, which once thrilled to the very bottom of our hearts, and that was echoed back again by the answering tones of sympathy. Sunk in its hollow socket, and shrouded in darkness is the eye, that once sparkled with pleasure, and that delighted to exchange the glance of mutual endearment. Still and cold, and offensive to the sight are those lively features, that were once indicative of a like lively heart ; a heart, that was pervaded with the kindest feelings, that was in perfect harmony with every chord in the musick of love, and is now converted into the food of worms.

Yes, brethren, these are undoubtedly some few of the more obvious trophies, which the monarch of the tombs displays in his dismal abodes ; and yet, gloomy and even loathsome as is their exterior, they are far from comprising all the consequences resulting from the transition out of life into the dark valley and region of the shadow of death. I am rather compelled to speak to you of another and far more important change ; a change that affects the soul alone, and that requires of every candidate for eternity to choose with promptness and decision between that punishment of sin on the one hand, and that recompense of righteousness on the other, which will respectively experience no period to their duration.

Are any of you then beguiling yourselves in the arms of pleasure, or indulging visions of ideal felicity in the slumber of spiritual death ? Contemplate, I entreat you, that swift advancing hour, when the dissolution of nature shall disperse every fancied dream of security, when it shall obliterate all the illusions connected with the pleasures of sin, and so awake all the terrors of the soul, that it shall never sleep again. All the various means of grace have heretofore been insufficient for the purpose. You have given little or no heed to the voice of conscience. You have either rejected or idly mused over the pages of the Bible, and to the remonstrances of the preacher, whether founded on its lifegiving doctrines, or upon the most mournful scenes of mortality, you have turned a deaf and impervious ear. But

when your last, great change shall come, if it be not preceded by repentance towards God, by faith in the Redeemer, and charity with all the world ; believe me, there is not one of your souls, which will not be roused to the most appalling realities, and forever experience what a fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God.

Are you however, brethren, already affianced to this gracious Being in the bonds of an everlasting covenant ? Have you already accepted those overtures of redeeming grace, which dawned upon the world at the advent of Christ, and that are indorsed with promises which centre in his merits and obedience, his cross and passion, his glorious resurrection and ascension ? When that great event shall at length transpire, which will surrender your immortal souls into the hands of a merciful and benign Creator and Judge : Oh what long cycles of revolving bliss will immediately commence their unclouded reign. How inconceivably bright and radiant will be the glories that beam from the throne and presence of God. With what unutterable joy will you chant the song of triumph to the eternal Majesty of heaven ; to Him, who created ; Him, who redeemed ; Him, who hath sanctified you, and all the inheritors of the kingdom of glory.

These therefore, Christian friends and brethren, are those views upon the certainty of death, upon the dubious character of its approach, and the present and everlasting change accompanying it, that I have judged it expedient to offer on one of those occasions, in which the Supreme Disposer of events is pleased to remind us, that he has made our days as it were a span long, that our age is even as nothing in respect of him, and that every man living is altogether vanity. To you, they may be profitable. To him whose days are numbered, they can neither be instrumental in quickening the sense of duty, nor in saving the soul alive. His appointed time is passed ; his meditations upon death ; his preparations to meet it in the prospect of a succeeding eternity, have come to an end. We have consigned his mortal relicks to their long home, and happy, thrice happy are his surviving relatives in the reflection that his pure spirit has doubtless gone to repose forever in the bosom of the Saviour he loved ; the God he adored. Sometimes we are called to mourn the loss of those, for whose future welfare, we can barely hope ; sometimes even hope itself is abandoned, and despairing thoughts however involuntary spring up in the mind

and deprive us of the best consolations connected with the bereavements of providence. But in this case, for him whose body lies in that mouldering tomb, praised be God, no sorrows of the kind oppress the heart;—praised be God, his interment is only regarded as the necessary prelude to a joyful resurrection.

John Chandler Williams, the subject of this brief memoir, and of whom I am about to speak upon the authority of those who knew him well, was born in the town of Roxbury, in this Commonwealth, in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-five. His parents sustained a highly respectable character, and the son, tenderly cherishing the memory of their virtues, often spoke of the assiduity with which they implanted in his youthful mind, the seeds of piety and religion, which were at length destined to germinate and bring forth in him the peaceable fruits of righteousness.

And this was the only legacy they left him. Becoming reduced in circumstances, they were unable to gratify his early passion for intellectual attainments, and he came to this very county as early as the year sixty-nine, with the view of engaging in some more active and enterprising occupation. But what can dampen the ardour of aspiring minds? What control the laudable ambition of gaining renown in a liberal profession? Most of the valuable men of every age have been the architects of their own fame, and the deceased impelled by the same inward excitement rose superiour to his humble fortunes; the love of letters returning, he cultivated the elementary pursuit of them with intense application, and in due time became one of the sons of Harvard.

In this celebrated institution, notwithstanding the difficulties by which he was surrounded, though in the true spirit of a mind panting for distinction, he disdained not to ring the college bell for the paltry sum which was to assist in defraying his expenses; in this celebrated institution, he passed through the usual academick course, and at the time of his graduation in seventeen hundred and seventy-eight was rewarded for his proficiency as a scholar with the latin oration, one of the first honours bestowed in our seminaries of learning.

Soon after this, he commenced the study of the law in the office of that distinguished jurist, the late Hon. John Worthington, of Springfield. To the acquisition of its elementary and practical principles he now applied himself with unwearied energy, and having completed the term of his novitiate, he entered upon the

practice of the profession, in this town, in the year one thousand seven hundred and eighty-two. As a lawyer his standing was more than respectable. His mind was richly stored with legal knowledge, and of that knowledge he availed himself with the noble determination to be useful rather than splendid in his day and generation. How well he succeeded in the effort is not passed from the memory of thousands. He was not the man to stir up petty suits, to fan the embers of a litigious spirit, and in this manner embroil the peace of society. But fair minded, just, and conscientious in the discharge of his duties, he acquired the esteem of the court, bar, and jury; he so ingratiated himself in the confidence of the community around him, by the integrity of his conduct, as to be proverbially and emphatically eulogized as 'the honest lawyer.' God grant, that excited by his example and emulous of his well-earned fame, there may be numbers to follow in his footsteps, and be gratified with the like discriminating praise. Surrounded as it is with numerous temptations, rendering it extremely difficult always to preserve the path of rectitude, the law is still a noble profession, and is well entitled to enlist in its service the brightest intellects and the purest hearts.

To his indefatigable attention to business the deceased was indebted for the ample competency of this world's goods, which enabled him to occupy a front rank in the list of our public-spirited and patriotick citizens. Shunning the dangers attendant upon a too eager thirst for riches, and recoiling from the idea of involving the property of others in visionary projects of personal aggrandizement; he yet contrived by industrious habits, by fidelity to his employers, and a commendable system of economy, not only to relieve himself from the pecuniary embarrassments of early life, not only to make abundant provision for the wife of his bosom and the children of his love; but at the same time gradually to acquire that, for which so many strive and strive in vain, an independent fortune. And he deserved it; such was the munificence of his spirit, that he richly deserved it. If men of his description were not to be found, there would be no exertions made to promote the general prosperity; our country would be a blank in the republick of letters and philosophy; not a college would attract the eye of the mind, not a church would lift up its ambitious spire to the heavens, not one single eleemosynary institution open wide its portals for the relief of the sick and diseased, the poor and destitute.

To the praise of your late fellow townsman, then, be it remembered, that he was always an active and liberal contributor to every object, that promised to enhance the common good. Your own town, in particular, has often witnessed, has often applauded his generous efforts in its favour, and long as this village, so beautifully imbosomed in the mountains, can boast of a publick square, of unusually large dimensions, so long will the name of Williams be borne in the memory of future generations as one of its most liberal benefactors.

In a political attitude, before the period of high party excitement, he enjoyed the general esteem, and was for six years, five of which were consecutive, honoured with a seat in the legislature of the state ; and if afterwards he had the misfortune to differ in opinion from the majority of his immediate fellow citizens, so as no longer to command their suffrages, yet could they give him ample credit for the sincerity of his views, for the zeal they inspired, and the frankness with which they were maintained. No one felt, that he was a dark, designing intriguer, a restless or ambitious demagogue. Every one, not bereft of reason and candour, must readily perceive that on all such subjects there is room enough for an honest diversity of sentiment among the true friends of their country, without resorting to the wretched expedient of impeaching secret motives or blasting private reputation.

But politicks are not to my taste ; I gladly abandon their far too irritable precincts and hasten to contemplate the character of your departed friend and neighbour in a point of view which is destined to survive when every thing else is buried in the grave. He was a Christian. After years of serious meditation, with pungent convictions of sin, and fully persuaded of the absolute necessity of being transformed by the renewing of his mind, he at length united with the congregational church in this place, in the year eighteen hundred and nine. As yet, however, he was far from enjoying that peace of God, which passeth all understanding. Accustomed to hear, presented in their most rigid and revolting features, what are strangely miscalled the doctrines of grace, rather than those of arbitrary power, he felt that through them the bruised reed was broken, the smoking flax was quenched ; he could not divest himself of the dreadful impression, that for him there was no such thing as reconciliation with his offended God ; that he was indeed preordained of heaven to be a vessel of wrath fitted for destruction.

But, by the divine blessing, these ill-judged and degrading views of the Supreme Being were not fated to continue. Determined to renounce the mere guidance of men, and no longer to receive implicitly the soul-harrowing divinity of the day, he applied himself more diligently and prayerfully than before to the study of those Scriptures, which are alone able to make us wise unto salvation. And the result was happier conceptions of the divine character and government. Instead of a despotick and capricious God, creating some men for the express purpose of saving, and others with the like intention of damning, them forever, he found to his inexpressible joy, that he was a God of love and compassion, whose tender mercies were over all his works, who spared not his own Son, but gave him up for us all, under the solemn assurance of the Apostle, that having done thus, ‘how much more shall he not also with him freely give us all things? And now succeeded beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness.’ He received Jesus in the light of an all-sufficient and gracious Redeemer. Renouncing self, with the righteousness and the worthiness of self, he reposed all his confidence in His merits and obedience, his precious death and sufferings, his advocacy and intercession with the Father. The fruits of the Spirit commenced their unclouded reign in his soul. With him, there were ‘love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law.’ With all ‘that are Christ’s, he crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts.’ He ‘lived in the Spirit,’ and he ‘walked in the Spirit.’

To enumerate a few of his graces. He was a man of prayer, of secret, fervent, and continual prayer. Since his departure, it has been my happiness to obtain unquestionable evidence of this essential trait in the Christian profession. I have seen the manual of his private devotions, and soiled by frequent use, filled with marginal notes and written collects, expressive of the deep humility, the childlike simplicity, the confiding faith, and ardent piety of his soul; it affords brilliant testimony, that his conversation was in heaven, whence also he looked for the Lord Jesus Christ; that his heart and his treasure were there.

He was a follower of Christ, where he says, ‘learn of me, for I am meek, and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls.’ There was nothing proud, arrogant, and boastful in his religion. He indulged not in hard speeches, odious comparisons,

or foul antipathies. Nor was he forever discoursing of himself, forever recounting the raptures of his spirit, and dwelling with ecstasy on the pretensions of the Pharisee, 'God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are;' but his piety was modest and unobtrusive, he imitated the devotion and felt the contrition of the publican in the gospel; he 'would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven,' but 'smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful unto me a sinner.'

In obedience to the positive injunction of Christ, he also 'loved his neighbour as himself.' Never did he 'turn away his face from any poor man.' 'If a brother or sister were naked and destitute of daily food,' never did he say unto them, in the mockery of affected compassion, 'depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled,' without offering to 'give them those things which are needful to the body.' But he was generous and humane, his heart was productive, and his hands were replete, with liberal alms. Without absolutely confining himself to that specifick amount, he is yet known to have conscientiously devoted a tenth part of his income to charitable purposes. He had no sympathy for the dissolute and vagrant beggar, but discriminating in his benevolence, the deserving were met with the smile of welcome, they were relieved, and are doubtless hereafter destined to 'rise up and call him blessed.'

As a husband, he was kind, gentle, and engaging; as a brother, amiable, confiding, and generous; as a father, tender, affectionate, and benign, he 'brought up his children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.' He spared no expense to make them accomplished women. He refrained not from those pious counsels, which were designed, and whose tendency it was, to win them over to the standard and cross of their Redeemer. And out of three beloved daughters, were two, by infinite wisdom removed from his truly paternal bosom to sleep in Jesus? A pang thrilled through his soul from which he never entirely recovered. It is even supposed to have been the proximate cause, to which is to be attributed the melancholy fact, that towards the close of an exemplary life, reason reeled, a cloud passed over the faculties he had borne so meekly, and his fair, open, and ingenuous mind became the prey of darkness and oblivion.

To this period, he had continued a diligent attendant upon the means of grace, in the society to which he was originally united. But I am particularly instructed to say, that after a

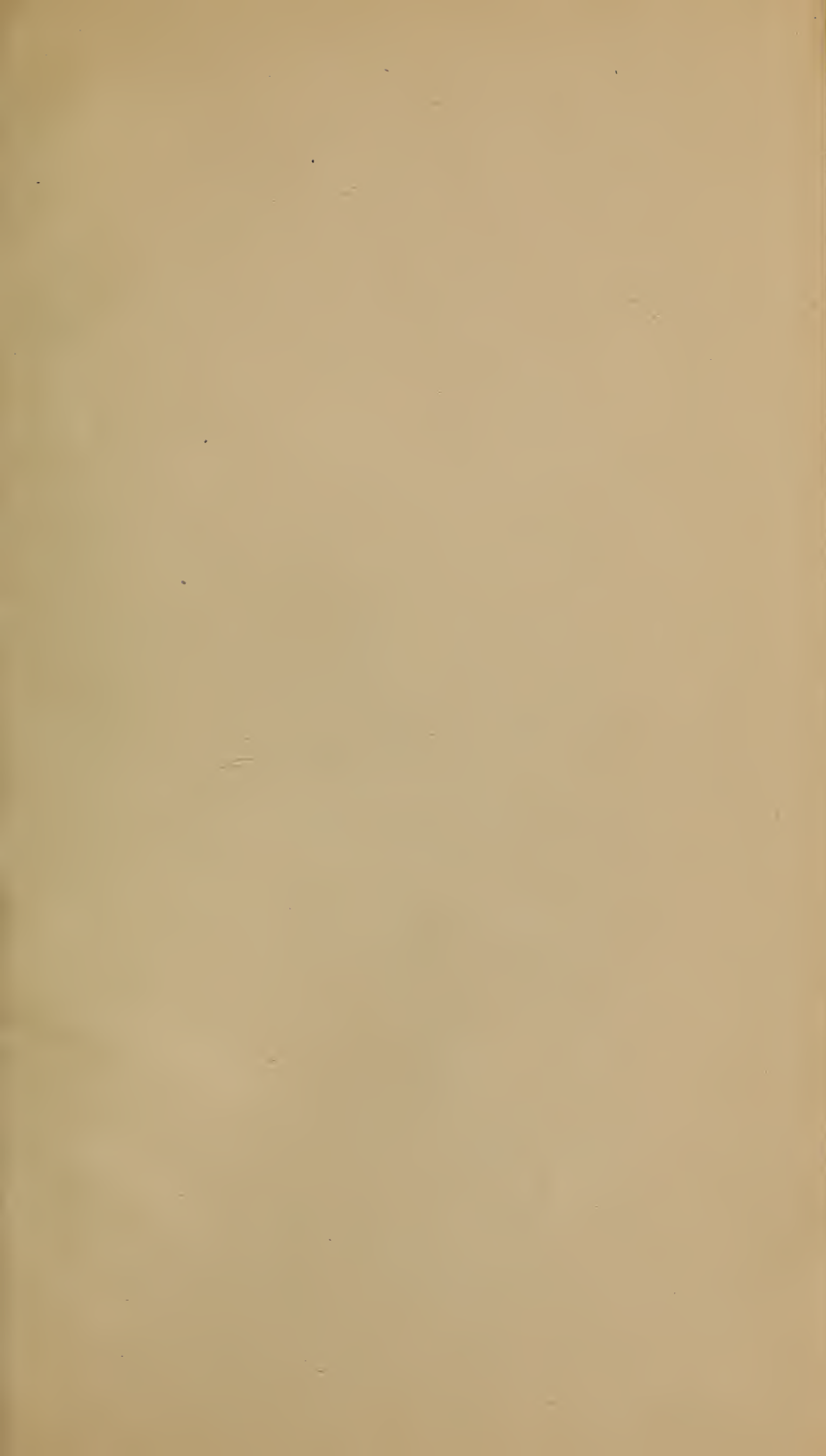
serious examination of the ministry, worship, and doctrine of the Protestant Episcopal Church, he became a sincere convert to her views of the institutions of the gospel, her exemplifications of the faith and practice of a Christian; and that he moreover repeatedly and solemnly avowed his determination to declare himself of her communion, should the opportunity occur, by the introduction of her services in the place of his residence. Would to God, that a similar spirit, a similar renunciation of the prejudices of birth and education, could pervade the hearts of all evangelical Christians! The ways of Zion would no longer mourn because of divided minds and separate establishments. Paul's admonition would no longer apply, 'Now I beseech you brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.' Peace and harmony would rather revive in the mystical body of Christ; she would attract all eyes and satisfy all hearts; 'her righteousness would go forth as brightness and her salvation as a lamp that burneth.' In the last lingering days of your departed friend, and during the intervals of the derangement which oppressed him, be it long remembered to the praise of the church, that some of her most solemn prayers were distinctly heard to be breathed from his trembling lips, and addressed to the throne of grace, in the name of her crucified Bridegroom and ascended Lord.

In concluding this brief survey, to adopt the language of his most intimate friend, 'the conduct as a Christian' of him whose loss we deplore, 'was exemplary and settled, even, calm, and active; proving by a course of holy obedience the love he bore his Saviour; neither carried away with the wild vagaries and extravagances, which consider frames and feelings the sum of all religion, nor yet degrading the glorious Christian faith, by making works the meritorious proof of his having a part in it; but taking the whole Word of God, as the pillar and ground of his faith, his confidence, and his duty, he never for a moment lost sight of the true panoply of the Christian, Jesus Christ and him crucified, Jesus taken by wicked hands and crucified and slain, Jesus dead and buried, Jesus risen again and ascended up into heaven, very God of very God; him he loved, him he served, he trusted in him, and, as we confidently believe, will not be disappointed of his hope.'

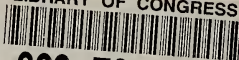
On the whole, therefore, brethren, we cannot refrain from

praising God in the comfortable persuasion that his removal has been ordered in mercy, and consummated in peace. The thought should prevail with all of you to act the same part in life. To the aged of your number, especially his old friends and acquaintance, let me present his blameless example as a powerful stimulus, if impenitent and unconverted, to seek the Lord while he may be found, and to call upon him when he is near; if already penitent and believing, to grow in grace as he grew, that so ye may be able, long as reason remains, to cherish the same bright presentiments of eternal life.

And ye mourners, are ye conscious, as ye have a right to be, that the Almighty has not frowned in displeasure upon his servant; but rather taken unto himself the righteous, that he may encircle his brows with the crown of glory and of triumph? No happier reflection can possibly be left to such as feel, that in his demise, the strongest bonds of affection and consanguinity are rent in twain. It is enough and may it prove enough to cheer the heart of the widow in her loneliness. Bereaved partner of his joys and sorrows! Be thine the comfort of the God of all comfort and consolation. And I ask no more for the sister, the son-in-law and daughter of his warm affection. The true balm for the afflicted is ever found in Gilead. The true physician to bind up the wounds of the soul ever liveth in the distant country of Immanuel. To Him then, to his open and embracing arms, let all that mourn confidently repair. True it is that your beloved relative has liquidated the great debt of nature. But as ye have heard, standing at the place of sepulture, with your thoughts musing on the vanity of all earthly things, 'Blessed are the dead, which die in the Lord, from henceforth, yea saith the spirit that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.' As ye have heard this, so do ye rejoice in being able to appropriate its refreshing odour to the memory of the pious dead; so do you resign the husband, the brother, and the father, to his bed of kindred dust, animated and consoled by the bright believing hope it so tenderly inspires. And may Almighty God, the God of love, of pardon and peace, mercifully with his favour look upon you; may he fill you with all spiritual comfort, benediction, and grace, that ye may so live in this brief and transient life, that in the world to come ye may again behold face to face your dear departed relative, and with him enjoy the blessing of life everlasting. AMEN.



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